

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 02989 171703Z
ACTION SS-25

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R 171651Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5715
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 02989

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UK, US, GW
SUBJ: THE ECONOMIC SUMMIT

1. DURING MY CONVERSATION WITH STATE SECRETARY POEHL OF THE FINANCE MINISTRY ON FEB. 15, HE SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT HE WOULD PROBABLY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FRG PREPARATIONS FOR THE ECONOMIC SUMMIT. HE SAID HE DID NOT WELCOME THIS ASSIGNMENT, IF TRUE, BECAUSE IT WAS A VERY TIME-CONSUMING AND DIFFICULT EXERCISE. HE HOPED THAT THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE PREPARATION WOULD BE KEPT SMALL. HE COULD FORESEE HIMSELF, SOMEONE FROM THE ECONOMICS MINISTRY, AND SOMEONE FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON THE GERMAN SIDE. IN FACT, HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, NOT THE FINANCE MINISTRY, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DEALING WITH THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE.

2. SPEAKING STRICTLY PERSONALLY, HE THOUGHT IT WOULD
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BE BEST THAT PREPARATIONS NOT INVOLVE A MEETING OF FINANCE MINISTERS THEMSELVES. ALTHOUGH HE REALIZED THAT THE CHANCELLOR AT ONE POINT HAD SUGGESTED SUCH A MEETING, HE BELIEVED THAT DEALINGS BETWEEN VERY SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS WERE LESS COMPLICATED AND COULD TAKE PLACE WITH GREATER DISCRETION. I ALSO SENSED FROM HIS REMARKS THAT THERE MIGHT BE A PROBLEM ON THE GERMAN

SIDE IN DEALING WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, IF THE FINANCE MINISTER WERE CHOSEN TO HANDLE THE PREPARATIONS. POEHL SAID THE CHANCELLOR HAD EARLIER BEEN ATTRACTED BY THE IDEA OF NON-OFFICIALS PARTICIPATING IN THE PREPARATORY PROCESS, BUT FROM POEHL'S OWN EXPERIENCE THIS WAS NOT DESIRABLE, SINCE NON-OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES, HOWEVER COMPETENT, WERE OUT OF TOUCH WITH GOVERNMENT THINKING.

3. POEHL SAID THAT PREPARATION AND PRIOR AGREEMENT ON BASIC POINTS WERE VERY IMPORTANT, SINCE IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THE SUMMIT NOT END UP IN A DISARRAY OR DISAGREEMENT. GIVEN THE FRENCH SITUATION AT THE MOMENT, HE SAW THIS AS A REAL DANGER. SHOULD THE SUMMIT CONCLUDE IN THIS FASHION, HE COULD SEE NOTHING BUT PROBLEMS WITH THE LDCS IN DEALING WITH THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE.

4. HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE BRITISH WOULD ISSUE THE INVITATIONS AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SUMMIT MEETING. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT IN REALITY THE U.S. WOULD HAVE TO UNDERTAKE THE LEADERSHIP. IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO HAVE A DISCUSSION WITHIN A SELECT GROUP TO DEAL WITH THE MORE DELICATE ASPECTS OF OUR PLANNING. HE SUGGESTED AS EVEN BETTER THE VISIT TO INTERESTED CAPITALS BY A SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL TO FACILITATE PREPARATIONS.

5. POEHL THOUGHT THE NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE GLOBAL ECONOMY WERE MAJOR THEMES
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FOR THE SUMMIT, WITH NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE CAUSING MOST IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS.
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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 17-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
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